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UTILITY APPLICATION FOR UNITED STATES PATENT
FOR
METHOD OF PLAYING CARD GAMES

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METHOD OF PLAYING CARD GAMES

The present invention relates to the gaming industry and more particularly to card-type games which are particularly suitable in casinos and card rooms.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Casinos and other gaming establishments continually require new games to offer their clientele. Most games allow players to play against a dealer (who represents a casino), not against each other.

The latest tendencies in the development of the casino industry point out to the fact that players often prefer games that can be played fast and at the same time offer a plurality of choices of playing the game. This is an opportunity to make a choice in a game that strengthens players' interest. That is why it is more preferable to create card games suggesting new betting options, ranking orders and actions from players' side.

U.S. Patent 5, 685,774 discloses a method of playing a card game involving a dealer and at least one player, comprising the steps of:

- determining whether to place a first stake that the player's hand will be greater than a first predetermined rank, where a plurality of hands are ranked according to predetermined rules and the first stake has a fixed payout;

- determining whether to place a second stake that the player's hand will beat the dealer's hand; placing at least one of the first and second stakes;

- the dealer dealing to each player and the dealer a hand consisting of three cards;

- the or each player who placed the second stake deciding, based on the player's hand, either to forfeit the second stake to the banker or to place a third stake;

- the dealer determining whether the dealer's hand exceeds a second predetermined rank, and if the dealer's hand does not exceed the second predetermined rank, the bank paying each player an amount based on the second stake and returning the third stake to the player, or if the dealer's hand exceeds the second predetermined rank, comparing the dealer's hand in turn with that of each other player who placed the second stake and if the player's hand is higher, the banker paying the player an amount based on both the second and third stakes, and if the player's hand is lower, the player forfeiting both the second and the third stakes to the banker;

- the banker paying the fixed payout stake in accordance with a predetermined scale to any player who placed the first stake and whose hand exceeds the first predetermined rank.

This known method of playing the card game does bring in variety because of suggested new three card combinations. However, the number of gaming combinations is insufficient for wide player interest, especially in the area of highly ranked combinations requiring big payout odds.

Another disadvantage inherent in the known types of card games is that at least some of the dealt cards are dealt face down. This fact creates insecurity for casinos, as long as players have to physically touch the cards in order to check them, which means a possibility of marking cards, illegal passing of cards, or exchanging information regarding received cards.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is an object of the present invention is to provide a method of playing a card game that contains the main principles of a poker card game and provides possibility to realize new gaming combinations, to increase the amount of potentially winning player's combinations, and hence, heighten interest for the game.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide a method of playing a card game that provides developing speed of the game and protection from illegal manipulation of cards.

The foregoing objects are accomplished in the invention by a method of playing a card game involving a dealer and at least one player, comprising the steps of:

- a) providing more than one pack of cards, preferable, at least two packs of cards in 52 sheets;
- b) providing a list of ranking game combinations corresponding to the use of said packs of cards;
- c) determining by players of whether to rate that the player's combination of cards will beat a combination of dealer's cards and placing a first stake;
- d) distributing by the dealer to each player who has placed the first stake, five cards from said at least 2 packs of cards, all face upwards and one card face upwards to the dealer;
- e) making a decision by each of said player, basing on the combination of player's cards, whether to forfeit the said stake or to continue the game by placing a second stake;
- f) taking by the dealer four more cards face upwards and determining whether the dealer has the necessary combination of cards that equals or exceeds the minimum predetermined rank for the continuation of game; wherein
- g) if the dealer fails to have the required combination of cards, the dealer paying the first stake and completing the cycle of the game;
- h) if the dealer does have the necessary combination of cards for the continuation of the game, the dealer comparing each player's combination of cards with the dealer's basing on said list of ranking game combinations; wherein if the game combination of the dealer is higher than that of the player, the dealer wins and collects the first stake and the second stake, if the game combination of the player is higher than that of the dealer the player wins and the dealer pays the first stake at a predetermined fixed rate, for example 1:1 and the second stake is paid according to the preset scale of payments for the ranking list of game combinations and the cycle of the game is completed.

Preferably, if a decision is made at the step (e) to continue the game, the player may buy a sixth card for a predetermined sum, for example, equal to the first stake and then has the further choice

to forfeit said stake or to continue the game basing on analysis of the opportunity to form a better five-card combination of the available six cards.

Preferably, the method uses the following list of ranking game combinations corresponding to the use of said at least two packs of cards consisting of 52 sheets.

- Royal Flush - five cards of one colour under the order from an ace,
- Straight Flush - five cards of one colour under the order from king and lower,
- Poker - five cards of one face value,
- Four of a Kind - four cards of one face value,
- Full House - three cards of one face value and two cards of one face value,
- Flush- five cards of one colour not under the order,
- Straight- five cards of different colours under the order,
- Three cards - three cards of one face value,
- Two pair - two cards of one face value + two cards of another face value,
- Pair - two cards of one face value,
- Empty - absence of any of higher the listed combinations.

Preferably, at the step (f), while making a decision to continue the game and before making the second stake, a player may place a stake hereinafter referred to as "insurance" which is based on the probability of the dealer having a combination of cards lower than the necessary minimum combination for continuation of the game. At the step (g), if the dealer does not have the minimum game combination, payment will be made by the dealer of the first stake and the stake "INSURANCE" at an appropriate predetermined rate. This completes the cycle of the game.

With the presence of the necessary combination of cards for the continuation of the game by the dealer, the bet "INSURANCE" is collected by the dealer and the game continues by comparing each player's combination of cards with the dealer's basing on the above mentioned list of ranking combinations of cards.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Embodiments of the invention will now be described, by way of example only, with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which

Fig. 1 is a diagrammatic representation of a facility for use in playing the card game according to an embodiment of the invention.

Fig. 2 is a flow-chart illustrating a sequence of actions which are carried out in an embodiment of the method of playing the card game according to the invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Fig 1 shows an example of a facility for use in playing the card game according to an embodiment of the invention. The facility comprises a game table 1 providing a game field area 2 of the dealer and playing areas 3 for a plurality of players. Each playing area 3 includes, in this example, three playing boxes 4, 5, 6, a set of playing chips (not shown on the drawings) for placing stakes. The facility also contains at least two standard packs of cards, each containing 52 sheets.

The method of playing the card game according to the invention is described below with reference to the flow-chart showed on Fig. 2.

The following described embodiment of the present invention uses six standard packs of playing cards. The dealer shuffles the cards and offers the players the opportunity to place their stakes. At step 7 (Fig. 2), each player places an initial (first) stake in the position marked "ANTE" (box 4 on Fig. 1) in order to participate in the game. At step 8, the dealer distributes 5 cards face upwards to each participating player and one card face upwards to the dealer. At step 9, each of the players check their cards for presence of game combinations and assess the probability of their combination being higher than that of the dealer.

The priority of the game combinations is defined according to the preset list of game combinations. The method uses a ranking hierarchy of game combinations in accordance with the present invention. The ranking hierarchy of game combinations is listed as follows:

- Royal Flush - five cards of one colour under the order from an ace,
- Straight Flush - five cards of one colour under the order from king and lower,
- Poker - five cards of one face value,
- Four of a Kind - four cards of one face value,
- Full House - three cards of one face value and two cards of one face value,
- Flush- five cards of one colour not under the order,
- Straight- five cards of different colours under the order,
- Three cards - three cards of one face value,
- Two pair - two cards of one face value + two cards of another face value,
- Pair - two cards of one face value,
- Empty - absence of any of higher the listed combinations.

Because of the use of at least 2 packs of playing cards, the above list of game combinations contains poker hands that could not be formed with the use of only one standard pack of playing cards of 52 sheets. In another embodiment of the invention, the combination "Poker" can be further defined to include such new combinations as "Suited Poker", i.e. 5 cards of one face value and one suit, "Suited Four of a Kind", i.e. 4 cards of one value and one suit, "Suited Full House", "Suited Three of a Kind", "Suited Two Pair", etc.

At step 10, if the player does not wish to continue to play, either because he has no game combinations or believes that his game combination will be lower than the dealer's, he folds his cards,

thereby losing the initial stake "ANTE". If at step 9 the player has made the decision to try and improve their combination then at step 11 the player buys a sixth card for the sum equal "ANTE".

If the player at stage 9 or at stage 11, after purchase of the sixth card, does not wish to continue to play, either because he has no game combinations or believes that his game combination will be lower than the dealer's, then there is a return to step 10, whereby he folds his cards, losing the initial stake "ANTE".

If at step 9 or at step 11, after the purchase of the sixth card, the player believes that his game combination is higher than the dealer's then the player continues the game at step 12 by placing a second stake in the position "BET" (Box 5), which is a predetermined amount relating to the stake "ANTE".

After the player has placed the stake "BET", the dealer draws four more cards for the dealer. Based on the combination received by the dealer, it is determined whether dealer's cards form the minimum required game combination, which is a "pair of two's". If the dealer does not have the minimum game combination (step 14) then at step 15 the dealer pays only the "ANTE" in the ratio 1:1. The stake "BET" in this case, does not participate in the game and is returned to the player. At step 16, the dealer collects all of the cards and proceeds to a new cycle of the game. If the dealer does have the minimum game combination for continuation of the game, i.e. a "pair of two's" or higher, then the game proceeds (step 17) and the game combinations of the players are compared to the game combination of the dealer. If the game combination of the dealer is higher than the player's (step 18) the dealer wins and collects, at step 19, the stakes "ANTE" and "BET". After that the game proceeds, as at step 16, to a new cycle of the game.

If the game combination of the player is higher than at of the dealer (step 20) the player wins and the dealer (step 21) pays the stake "BET" at the ratio of 1:1 and the stake "ANTE" is paid according to the predetermined scale of payouts corresponding to the rank of the game combination. After that the game proceeds, as at step 16, to a new cycle of the game.

The described method of playing the card game assumes a number of optional stakes, one of which is "INSURANCE". At steps 9 and 11, the player has an opportunity to place this stake, providing they have the minimum required game combination, for example, "straight" or higher.

The purpose of this stake "INSURANCE" is to eliminate the possibility of the player receiving no payment for a high ranking combination in the event of the dealer not having the minimum game combination for continuing the game.

Having placed this stake (step 22), the player returns to step 12 to continue the game at steps 13, 14 and 17, where, at step 14 (the dealer has no minimum game combination), the stake "INSURANCE" is considered to be a winner and is paid in the ratio 1:1. At step 17 (the dealer has the minimum game combination), the stake "INSURANCE" loses.

Another optional stake is "BONUS" which can be made on box 6 of the gaming field 1 at step 7 at the same time as the initial stake "ANTE" is made. The stake "BONUS" is considered to be a

winner if, after distribution of the players' first five cards, there is the presence of a predetermined minimum game combination relating to the list of ranking game combinations and is paid according to a preset payout scale. The stake "BONUS" loses if the first five cards of the player do not achieve the minimum rank in the designated list of game combinations.

The most significant innovative advantage of the method of playing card game according to the invention is the security achieved from any possible illegal manipulation of cards. This security is provided through the game procedures, which forbid the touching of the cards by the players, made possible by virtue of the fact that all cards are dealt face upwards.